















# Historic Leaves

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# HISTORIC LEAVES

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE  
Somerville Historical Society

AT

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Somerville, Mass.

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CHARLES DARWIN ELLIOT

# HISTORIC LEAVES

## *MEMORIAL NUMBER*

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### OUR SEAL.

By J. Albert Holmes, for the Committee.



Charles D. Elliot, always interested in the Historical Society, was an active member of its Seal Committee. The Seal as finally adopted appears for the first time in this issue of Historic Leaves, and the Somerville Historical Society affectionately dedicates the first use of it to his memory.

The original drawing of the Seal was made in April, 1909, by William Henry Upham, of Somerville, an artist and illustrator, and a descendant of John Upham, of Weymouth and Malden, 1600-1681.

It consists of a shield outlined in gold, on which appears illustrated, also in gold, the launching of the Blessing of the Bay, the raising on Prospect Hill of the first American flag, and the Old Powder House. The shield is surrounded by a looped ribbon of blue, on which in gold letters is the name, "Somerville Historical Society," and the date of organization, "1897."

Regarding the Blessing of the Bay, "Some time in 1631," to quote Mr. Elliot, "the governor (Winthrop) seems to have

come to Somerville territory and established himself at Ten Hills, where he evidently lived during the summers of many years, Charlestown peninsula, and later Boston, being his winter residence. On July 4, 1631, he built a bark at Mistick, which was launched this day, and called the Blessing of the Bay.

"This was at Ten Hills Farm, in Somerville, just east of the present Wellington Bridge. She was of thirty tons burden, and was the first craft built in Massachusetts large enough to cross the ocean. She was constructed of locust timber, cut on the farm, and was built by subscription at a cost of £145. In 1632 she was converted into a cruiser to suppress piracy on the New England coast. Her energies were to be particularly directed against one David Bull, who, with fifteen Englishmen, had committed acts of piracy among the fishermen and plundered a settlement. She therefore may lay claim to the honor of having been the first American vessel of war." Mention of the ship is made several times in the Colony Records up to 1692.

The Cambridge Chronicle in 1852 stated that the identical "ways" on which the Blessing of the Bay was built were still in existence and in fair preservation. James R. Hopkins, chief of the Somerville Fire Department, who was familiar with the locality, and John S. Hayes, master of the Forster School, together with two firemen, William A. Perry and William A. Burbank, in May, 1892, secured a portion of the "ways" from which the bark was launched. Three vases and two gavels were made of the wood secured, and one of the gavels is now in the possession of the Historical Society.

From the Somerville Journal Souvenir number, March 3, 1892, we take the following:—

"The Powder House, or old mill, at West Somerville is unquestionably the most interesting historical relic in Massachusetts, and it has, indeed, but few rivals in New England. The exact date when it was built is not known. It was originally a grist-mill, and was probably built by John Mallet, who came into possession of the site in 1703-'04. In his will, made

in 1720, the grist-mill is left to his two sons. The mill was undoubtedly built several years previous to 1720, and for some time after that it continued to grind the corn for the farmers for many miles around.

"In 1747 the old mill, with a quarter of an acre of land, was sold to the Province of Massachusetts Bay for £250. After being remodeled it was used for storing the powder of the surrounding towns and of the province.

"The Powder House commemorates one of the earliest hostile acts of the Revolution. On the morning of September 1, 1774, General Gates sent an expedition to seize the powder at the magazine, and 260 soldiers embarked at Long Wharf in Boston and proceeded up Mystic River, landing at Ten Hills Farm, from where they marched to the Powder House. The 250 half-barrels of powder which the magazine contained were speedily transferred to the boats and removed to Castle William (now Fort Independence), in Boston Harbor. A detachment of troops also visited Cambridge, and carried off two field pieces which they found there. The news of the seizure of the powder spread with great rapidity, and on the following morning thousands of armed men from the surrounding towns assembled on Cambridge Common, ready to oppose the forces of the king.

"The Powder House was used for storing powder until the erection of a new magazine at Cambridgeport." In 1836 it came into the possession of Nathan Tufts, in whose family it remained until May 28, 1892, at which time it was presented to the city, together with one and one-half acres of surrounding land, to which three acres more were added by purchase. One of the conditions under which the gift was made was that the Powder House be kept perpetually in repair, and that the land surrounding it be made into a public park and forever maintained as such, to be called the Nathan Tufts Park. The conditions have been fully carried out by the city.

The bronze tablet on the Powder House, setting forth its history, was placed there by the Massachusetts Society of

the Sons of the Revolution on September 1, 1892, 118 years after the seizure of the gunpowder by General Gage. "The Old Powder House is about thirty feet high, with a diameter of fifteen feet at the base. Its walls, which are of bluestone (probably quarried on the hillside), are two feet thick. Within, the old structure formerly had three lofts, supported by heavy beams. Originally it had but one entrance, that on the southwest side."

The following is from Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution":—

"On the first of January, 1776, the new Continental Army was organized, and on that day the Union flag of thirteen stripes was unfurled for the first time in the American camp, Somerville, Mass. On that day the king's speech was received in Boston, and copies of it were sent to Washington, who, in a letter to Joseph Reed, written January 4, 1776, said: 'The speech I send you. A volume of them were sent out by the Boston gentry, and farcical enough, we gave great joy to them without knowing or intending it, for on that day, the day which gave being to the new army, but before the proclamation came to hand, we had hoisted the Union flag, in compliment to the United Colonies. But behold, it was received in Boston as a token of the deep impression the speech had made upon us, and as a signal of submission. So we hear by a person out of Boston last night. By this time I presume they begin to think it strange that we have not made a formal surrender of our lines.'

"The flag bore the device of the English Union, which is composed of the cross of St. George, to denote England, and St. Andrew's cross, in the form of an X, to denote Scotland. It must be remembered that at this time the American Congress had not declared their independence, and that even yet the Americans proffered their warmest loyalty to British justice, when it should redress their grievances."

## CHARLES DARWIN ELLIOT.

### FAMILY HISTORY.\*

Charles Darwin Elliot, son of Joseph and Zenora (Tucker) Elliot, was born in Foxboro, Mass., June 20, 1837.

Among Mr. Elliot's ancestors were Major Eleazer Lawrence, Lieutenant Eleazer Lawrence, Captain Jonathan Wade, Lieutenant Nicholas White, Samuel Scripture, Marshal-General Edward Mitchelson, Marshal-General John Green, John Nutting, Zachariah Hicks, and Thomas Eliot, all soldiers in the King Philip's or other Colonial wars; also, Ensign John Whitman and Samuel Champney, soldiers in the King Philip's war, and deputies to the general court; also, Rev. Nathaniel Rogers, of Ipswich, Ruling Elder Richard Champney, of Cambridge, and William Pitt, high sheriff of Bristol, Eng.

Thomas Eliot, above mentioned, was admitted a freeman of Swansea, Mass., February 22, 1669, and became a member of the Baptist church under Rev. John Myles; he was one of the proprietors of Taunton North Purchase. Of his ancestry no record has been found. He died in Rehoboth, Mass., May 23, 1700, and his wife Jane, whom he probably married about 1676 or 1677, died in Taunton, Mass., November 9, 1689. They had five children: Abigaile, Thomas, Jr., Joseph, Elizabeth, and Benjamin. Thomas, Sr., was a corporal in Captain William Turner's company in King Philip's war, in 1675 and 1676; his sword, gun, and ammunition are mentioned in the inventory of his estate. Joseph, his son, was born in Taunton March 2, 1684, and died April 21, 1752. He married, July 22, 1710, Hannah White, daughter of John White; she died March 5, 1775, aged ninety-two years. Their children were: Joseph, Jr., John, Hannah, Samuel, Nehemiah, Abigail, and Ebenezer. Nehemiah, son of Joseph, Sr., was born March 8, 1719, and died December 8, 1802; he was at one time treasurer of Norton North Precinct; he married, September 23, 1747, Mercy White, daughter of Lieutenant Nicholas White, of Norton; she was born July

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\*From the latest History of Middlesex County.

7, 1723, and died May 8, 1780. Their children were: Joseph, Nehemiah, Jr., Jacob, and Mercy.

Joseph, son of Nehemiah, Sr., was born in Norton June 25, 1749; he married, May 7, 1773, Joanna Morse, daughter of Elisha Morse; she was born September 17, 1751, and died December 6, 1837. Joseph Eliot was a minute-man of the Revolution, and marched at the Lexington alarm, April 20, 1775, for Boston; he served through the siege of Boston and, re-enlisting, through the campaign of New York and New Jersey under General Washington, and as corporal in the Saratoga campaign under General Gates; he died of disease while in the service, December 15, 1777. C. D. Elliot had his powder horn, canteen, and bayonet, and his letters to his wife while he was in the army. The children of Joseph and Joanna (Morse) Eliot were: Joel and Hannah. Joel was born August 30, 1775, and died at Foxboro, Mass., July 23, 1864; his wife, Mary Murray (Flagg) Elliot, was born in Cambridge July 14, 1782, and died in Foxboro January 23, 1865; she was daughter of Timothy and Sarah (Hicks) Flagg, and granddaughter of John Hicks, a member of the Boston Tea Party, and one of the Cambridge minute-men "who fell in defence of the liberty of the people, April 19, 1775," in whose memory the city of Cambridge has erected a monument in the old historic burying ground near Harvard Square, where they are buried. A tablet on Massachusetts Avenue marks the spot where John Hicks and three other patriots were killed by the flank guard of the British. Joel Elliot lived for many years in Cambridge, having a store near Harvard Square; he was at one time a member of the Cambridge fire department. In 1816 he moved to Foxboro, Mass., where he became a prosperous farmer; it was he who changed the spelling of the family name from Eliot to its present form. The children of Joel and Mary M. were: Mary Joanna, Joseph, Sarah Elizabeth, Caroline, Charles Edwin, Hannah, Timothy, Joel Augustus, and Nancy Maria.

Joseph, son of Joel and Mary M. (Flagg) Elliot, and father of Charles D. Elliot, was born in Cambridge, near Harvard

Square, January 1, 1807, and died in Somerville, Mass., July 7, 1874. He married, at Mt. Holly, Vt., December 24, 1835, Zenora, daughter of Stephen, Jr., and Sibil (Lawrence) Tucker. He built and settled in Foxboro Centre; he moved thence to Wrentham, from there to Malden, and in 1846 to Somerville, where for fifteen years he was station agent of the Prospect Street, now Union Square, station of the Fitchburg Railroad. He was at one time a member of the Somerville fire department, and in early life of the state militia; in his early days Joseph Elliot was much interested in politics, and was offered the postmastership of Foxboro, which he declined. He was identified with the old Democratic party in its contests with the Whigs, but became a Republican upon the organization of that party, and voted its ticket the remainder of his life. When a young man he became a Universalist; he was a zealous believer, and was one of the first members of the First Universalist Society in Somerville. He had a wide acquaintance with the leaders of the faith, among them Rev. Thomas Whittemore, editor of the *Trumpet*, who was a frequent visitor in his home.

Zenora (Tucker) Elliot, mother of Charles D. Elliot, was born in Mt. Holly, Vt., February 10, 1809, and died while on a visit to that place October 25, 1885, in the same room in which she was married. She was educated at Randolph Academy, Mass. In early life she was a Methodist, but later a Universalist; she was much interested in religious, literary, temperance, and soldiers' relief work. She was a respected member of several organizations. Her father, Stephen Tucker, Jr., was son of Captain Stephen and Abigail (Newell) Tucker. He was born in Charlestown, Mass., February 14, 1764, and died in Mt. Holly, Vt., December 26, 1828. During the burning of Charlestown, June 17, 1775, his mother fled with her children across "the neck" to Medford, constantly threatened with destruction from the British shot and shell which howled past their carriage. Stephen, Jr.'s, father was a sea captain, and was absent on a voyage at the time of the battle

of Bunker Hill. Stephen, Jr., married Sibil Lawrence, December 20, 1790, at Littleton, Mass. About the year 1795 or 1796 he removed to Mt. Holly, Vt., where he was for many years town clerk, selectman, and trial justice. Sibil Lawrence, daughter of Simon and Sibil (Robbins) Lawrence, was born June 10, 1770, and died April 16, 1813; in the Lawrence genealogy her ancestry is traced to John Lawrence, of Watertown, Mass., and thence by some back to Sir Robert Lawrence, of Ashton Hall, England, one of the crusaders, knighted in 1191 for bravery at the siege of Acre by Richard Coeur de Lion. Her grandfather, Lieutenant Eleazer Lawrence, was prominent in the Indian wars, and Simon, her father, was a soldier in the Revolution. The children of Joseph and Zenora Elliot were: Charles Darwin, Alfred Lawrence, and Mary Elvira.

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## MEMOIR.

By J. Albert Holmes,

Member of the Boston Society of Civil Engineers.

Charles D. Elliot was educated in the schools of Foxboro, Wrentham, Malden, and in the old Milk Row School and the Prospect Hill Grammar School, Somerville, Mass., and in Henry Munroe's private school on Walnut Street, this city, which he left to enter, at the age of twelve years, the Hopkins Classical School, situated at that time on the south side of Main Street, now Massachusetts Avenue, a few rods westerly from Dana Street, Cambridge. This school was in existence from 1840 to 1854, and was supported from a fund left by Edward Hopkins, "for a grammar school in Cambridge." The teacher during Mr. Elliot's attendance was Edmund B. Whitman. Mr. Elliot was a member of the first entering class of the Somerville High School. The front portion of the present Somerville City Hall was built and dedicated April 28, 1852, as a high school. The school from 1852 to 1867 occupied the upper floor, and

afterwards, for a few years, the entire building. It was here during the years 1852 to 1855 that Mr. Elliot studied, first under Principal Robert Bickford, 1852-1854, then for a short period unded a Mr. Hitchcock, who was in turn succeeded by Leonard Walker in 1855.

Mr. Elliot's engineering education began in the office of Stearns & Sanborn in June, 1855, and was the result of the interest in his mathematical ability shown by Daniel A. Sanborn, a member of the firm, and a near neighbor of the family. The other member was William B. Stearns, chief engineer, and afterward president of the Fitchburg Railroad. Mr. Sanborn was the founder of the Sanborn Insurance Map Company. The firm afterwards became Stearns & Stevenson, C. L. Stevenson being the new member. Mr. Elliot studied for his profession in this office until July, 1859, and most of that time was devoted to work on locations, bridges, and construction for the Fitchburg Railroad; but a part of his time was given to the city of Charlestown, on sewers and other city work, and to the Cambridge Water Works.

In July, 1859, he was appointed principal assistant under George L. Richardson, C. E., on the street surveys for the town of Somerville, and engaged in this work during 1859-1860. During 1860-1861 he was in partnership with T. Edward Ames, C. E., afterwards Brevet Major Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Volunteers, and some time city engineer of Charlestown. They had offices in Winnisimmet Square, Chelsea, and in Somerville. In 1862 he was in the office of J. G. Chase, C. E., later city engineer of Cambridge, and was most of the time engaged in running levels, establishing benches, and making plans for sewers; also in making preliminary studies and plans for the Charlestown Water Works. During the year he drew for General Henry L. Abbot, of Cambridge, a plan of the siege of Yorktown, Va., from notes by General Abbot. The execution of the plan so pleased the general that he procured for Mr. Elliot an appointment from the War Department as Assistant

Topographical Engineer. (See next paper for Mr. Elliot's war record.)

In January, 1865, Mr. Elliot removed to Cambridge, Mass., and entered the office of William S. Barbour. During the year he was engaged in making railroad surveys from the limestone quarries to the lime kilns at Rockland, Me.

During 1866 and 1867 he was engaged in the manufacture of paper collars and cuffs, for which much of the machinery used was either invented or improved by Mr. Elliot, and all the patterns and designs used were his own. He was possessed of considerable inventive genius. Besides the machinery previously mentioned, he planned and made a working model for a lawn mower. This was previous to the Civil War, and long before this useful machine was known to commerce. Another of his practical ideas which antedated considerably its actual adoption by the War Department, was the use of plate armor for ships. He invented, shortly before the introduction of ironclads, a device for drawing copper bolts from ships so as to preserve the bolts; this device was patented. Still another practical idea of which he talked, as early as 1869 or 1870, was that of perforated pipes to be built into walls and partitions, and to be connected with the hose in case of fire. A patent for some such device has since been granted.

Mr. Elliot removed in the spring of 1867 to Brookline, and in the autumn of the same year to Newton Centre, Mass. In 1868 he was in the office of J. F. Fuller, engineer for the Boston Water Power Company, where he was engaged upon sewers and other engineering work in the Back Bay. He formed a partnership in 1869 with William A. Mason, C. E., of Cambridge, and during 1869-'70 was engaged in general engineering, street and land improvement, and the construction of the famous Beacon Trotting Park in Allston, now occupied by the Boston & Albany Railroad roundhouse and yards.

In April, 1870, he removed from Newton Centre to Cambridgeport, and in December of the same year returned to Somerville, where he opened an office in the newly-constructed

Pythian Block, Union Square. It was at this time, when asked by Ira Hill, the owner of the block, whom he would suggest as an occupant for the only remaining office in the building, that Mr. Elliot proposed that a newspaper be started, and upon this suggestion the Somerville Journal was launched. Previous to and during the winter of 1870-1871 he attended afternoon and evening lectures on chemistry, and engaged in laboratory work in mechanical and mining engineering, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

During 1871-1872 he was chief engineer of the Arlington Water Works, and in 1872 was elected the first city engineer of the newly-incorporated city of Somerville. In 1873 he was engaged in private practice, and employed by Middlesex County in the widening of Somerville Avenue and the re-location of the horse railroad from the side to the centre of the avenue, and the adjustment of the damages incurred by the widening. He was re-appointed city engineer in 1874 and 1875. Among the important engineering works carried on under Mr. Elliot as city engineer were the construction of the newly-widened Somerville Avenue, the construction of the Somerville part of the sewerage system for abolishing the Miller's River nuisance, which involved the construction of an eight-foot sewer in Somerville Avenue and the filling of Miller's River by digging off the top of historic Prospect Hill, and the construction of Broadway Park.

On January 30, 1875, Mr. Elliot moved into a house which he had built for himself at 59 Oxford Street, Somerville. From 1876 to 1880, inclusive, he was engaged in general engineering, and as an expert in sanitary, hydraulic, and railroad work. During 1881 and 1882 he made surveys and plans for one of the numerous Cape Cod Canal schemes. Following this and until 1890 he was engaged in making insurance surveys in Boston and vicinity and in Lynn. In 1887 he was made agent for the estate of James C. Ayer, of Lowell, and in his capacity as an engineer made plans of, and sold for the estate, all of its land

in Somerville, amounting to seventy acres.\* In 1895-'96 he made for the Metropolitan Park Commission the surveys and plans for the Mystic Valley Parkway, from Winchester Centre to the Old Mystic Pumping Station at the western end of the city of Somerville, and performed for the same Commission some work in the Middlesex Fells Reservation. From 1887 till his death he was constantly engaged as a consulting engineer, and employed as an expert by railroads, municipalities, corporations, and private individuals, and in the adjustment of damages and awards, and the apprisement of real estate.

His activities covered a broad field, and his recommendations resulted in many public improvements. His was the first suggestion to extend the Mystic Valley Parkway from the Pumping Station near West Medford to the Old Powder House in Somerville, afterwards constructed by the city and called Powder House Boulevard. As engineer to the Cambridge Electric Light Company, 1902-'04, he made a request to the Charles River Basin Commission that a lock forty-five feet wide, with a depth of eighteen feet at low water, be constructed through the new dam at Craigie's Bridge, instead of one of less dimensions, which was done. He was deeply interested in the Cross-town boulevard through the eastern part of Somerville, to connect Middlesex Fells with the reservations south of Boston, and as chairman of a committee of the Somerville Board of Trade appeared many times before the legislative committee at the State House to advocate it, and finally succeeded in having a bill passed, which, however, was vetoed by the Governor for economic reasons.

Mr. Elliot was one of the founders of the Somerville Historical Society, of which he was president for three years. He took great pleasure in collecting ancient maps and manuscripts relating to American history, and particularly to Somerville.

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\*This was bounded approximately by Highland Avenue, Cedar Street, the main line of the Lowell Railroad, and Willow Avenue.

No person was better informed on the history of this section than Mr. Elliot, and he prepared a brief history of the town and city in 1896.

Though we have a number of articles from his pen relating to engineering, he wrote largely on historical subjects. His writings show complete knowledge of his subject, and are altogether interesting. A partial list of his publications is as follows:—

#### ON ENGINEERING.

As city engineer of Somerville, he prepared the reports for the years 1872-1874-1875; "Clay Pits and Free Baths," editorial in Somerville Journal, 1877; "Pollution of the Water Supply," Somerville Journal, about 1888; "What Somerville Needs," about 1890; "Civil Engineering as a Vocation," October 28, 1893; "A Feasible Metropolitan Boulevard for Somerville," December 29, 1894; "Proposed Charles River Dam and the Commerce and Industries of Cambridge," 1902; "Request for a Wide and Deep Lock in Charles River Dam," 1904.

#### HISTORICAL PAPERS.

Between February 8 and August 9, 1890, he contributed to the Somerville Journal nine articles on the following subjects: "Revolutionary Landmarks"; "Aborigines"; "The First National Flag"; "Paul Revere's Ride and the March to Concord"; "British Retreat from Concord"; "Battle of Bunker Hill"; "Old Roads"; "Historic Tablets"; "Historic Somerville"; and, following these, "The Early History of Ten Hills Farm," Somerville Journal, November 8, 1890, and May 23, 1891; "Somerville in War Times," and "Early History of Somerville," Somerville Journal, Semi-Centennial Souvenir, March 3, 1892; a brief "History of Somerville," in "Somerville Past and Present," 1896; "The Somerville Historical Society," "Myles Standish and the Plymouth Explorers," "Governor John Winthrop and His Ten Hills Farm," "Somerville in the Revolution," all in Somerville Historical Society Souvenir, November 28-

December 3, 1898; Genealogical Pamphlet, "Charles Darwin Elliot-Mary Elvira Elliot," 1901; obituaries, "Hon. Charles Hicks Saunders and Hon. Isaac Story," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 1, July, 1902; "The Stinted Common," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 1, October, 1902; inscription for Prospect Hill Tower, *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 2, January, 1904; "John Winthrop," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 3, July, 1904; obituary, "Quincy Adams Vinal," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 3, October, 1904; "The Blessing of the Bay," read before the Winter Hill Improvement Association, November 16, 1904; "The Old Royall House, Medford," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 4, April, 1905; "Union Square and Its Neighborhood About the Year 1846," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 6, April, 1907; "Somerville's Development and Progress," *Somerville Journal*, May 3, 1907; "Union Square Before the War," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 6, July, 1907; "Port Hudson," *Historic Leaves*, Vol. 7, October, 1908; "Charles Tufts," read before the Somerville Historial Society November 24, 1908; "Sketch of George O. Brastow," *Somerville Journal*, December 13, 1908.

Mr. Elliot became a member of the Boston Society of Civil Engineers December 17, 1902. He was also a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers from August 7, 1872, to January 4, 1898; the National Geographic Society; Massachusetts Real Estate Exchange; Somerville Board of Trade, in which he took a very active part, and to which he devoted much of his valuable time. He was a member of the Men's Club of the First Universalist Church; the Winter Hill Improvement Association; the American Historical Association; New England Historic Genealogical Society; Sons of the American Revolution; and Delft Haven Colony of the Pilgrim Fathers.

Charles Darwin Elliot and Emily Jane, adopted daughter of Judge Nathaniel F. Hyer, were married in New Orleans, La., September 3, 1863. Five children were born of this union. He is survived by Mrs. Elliot; a brother, Alfred L. Elliot; a sister, Mary Elvira Elliot; and four children, Clara Zenora, Ella Flor-

ence, a professional genealogist, Charles Joseph, a civil engineer, and Adelaide Genevieve. The son was associated with his father in the engineering business, and has succeeded to his practice.

Mr. Elliot was very ill during the winter of 1907-'08. It was thought he had fully recovered from this attack, though his friends noticed a slight diminution of his accustomed vigor. His condition during the evening of November 24, while reading the paper on Charles Tufts before the Somerville Historical Society, caused great anxiety to his family and friends. He was much improved, however, on the following day, and went about his duties as usual.

On Saturday, December 5, Mr. Elliot spent the entire day out of doors. He must have become chilled by the exposure, for he was obliged to see his physician upon returning home, but was about the house on Sunday. During the evening he was taken seriously ill, and for a time it was thought he would not survive, and though he rallied from this attack and was in his usual cheerful frame of mind the following day, the possibility of his recovery was slight. From this time he did not leave his bed. There was another crisis on Wednesday, and the end came most peacefully the following morning. He died at 11 a. m. December 10, 1908. His death was due to heart trouble and other complications.

Services were held at his late residence, 59 Oxford Street, Somerville, on Sunday, December 13, and at the Winter Hill Universalist Church. The burial was at Woodlawn.

The Somerville Journal of December 18, 1908, gave a full account of the funeral services. The pastor, Rev. Francis A. Gray, paid a fitting tribute to the memory of the deceased, and again, at the memorial service, held October 31, 1909, spoke in eulogy of Mr. Elliot's many fine qualities as a citizen and a man.

Resolutions or letters of condolence were sent to Mr. Elliot's family from the Somerville Historical Society, the Somer-

ville Board of Trade, Willard C. Kinsley Post, No. 139, Department of Massachusetts, G. A. R., Somerville Woman's Relief Corps, Men's Club of the First Universalist Church, the Winter Hill Improvement Association, and the Haverhill Historical Society.

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## MR. ELLIOT'S ARMY RECORD.

By Levi L. Hawes.

My acquaintance with our late friend and associate, Charles D. Elliot, dates from the birth of the Somerville Historical Society. From the acquaintance thus formed there naturally sprang a friendship that grew and strengthened, till the memory only remained.

I was quick to learn that we had, not a little, but much in common. In a heart-to-heart talk one day, friend Elliot made a remark that prompted me to tell him something of my feelings and emotions on that Sunday morning, December 14, 1862, as I stood on the parapet at Fort St. Philip and witnessed the passing of the fleet of transports bearing General Banks and his troops to New Orleans to relieve General Butler. Whereupon he very quietly and modestly said: "I accompanied that expedition." This was the first intimation I had of his connection with the Union Army. Needless to say, a fraternal feeling existed between us from that moment.

If from this point I quote freely from the History of the Nineteenth Army Corps, and from Mr. Elliot's paper on "The Siege of Port Hudson," read before the Somerville Historical Society, and printed in Historic Leaves for October, 1908, and from others, I trust you will hold me blameless.

The quality of the work of Mr. Elliot as an engineer and draftsman had become widely known, but the drawing of a plan of the siege of Yorktown, Va., from notes of General Henry L. Abbot, of Cambridge, was so finely executed that, in order to express his appreciation of the work, General Abbot procured for Mr. Elliot an appointment from the War Department as Assistant Topographical Engineer,

Leaving the virtues of the turkey to be discussed by others, Mr. Elliot, in his young, patriotic, and vigorous manhood, on the day before Thanksgiving took train for New York, and on December 4, 1862, embarked on the transport North Star with General Banks' headquarters staff, Nineteenth Army Corps, for the Department of the Gulf.

Upon arriving at New Orleans, December 14, 1862, General Banks took command December 15, although formal orders were not issued till December 17. So promptly did General Banks act that on December 16 General Grover's expedition got under way for Baton Rouge, and arrived there on December 17. The new staff of the department included Major David C. Houston, Chief Engineer, and Captain Henry L. Abbot, Chief of Topographical Engineers; the latter would therefore be regarded as Mr. Elliot's immediate commander. It appears from his paper on Port Hudson that Mr. Elliot commenced immediately to practice one branch of his profession, for he says that on January 14, 1863, he completed a detailed map of the Mississippi River from New Orleans to about thirty miles above Vicksburg—a piece of professional work that did him great credit. And now begins the first forward movement of the Nineteenth Army Corps in which Mr. Elliot participated. "By March 7, leaving T. W. Sherman to cover New Orleans, and Weitzel to hold strongly La Fourche, Banks had a marching column composed of Augur's, Emory's, and Grover's divisions, 15,000 strong. On March 9 tents were struck, to be pitched no more for five hard months." The troops proceeded to Baton Rouge, and there awaited the arrival of the delayed fleet. On March 12, all having arrived, General Banks for the first time reviewed his army. On March 13 and the day following the army marched to the rear of Port Hudson. Here the engineers found plenty of work in store for them, for the maps were more imperfect than usual; even the road by which the guns were to have gone into battery did not exist! Admiral Farragut's moving a portion of his fleet above Port Hudson before the hour agreed upon, and his signal either

not heard or not reported, placed General Banks in an awkward predicament. Briefly, the expedition was abandoned, and Banks returned to Baton Rouge, and then to New Orleans. On April 8 Mr. Elliot again moved with headquarters to Brashear, and for the next six weeks Banks, with Emory, Grover, and Weitzel, was skirmishing and fighting along the bayous of western Louisiana to the Red River. The two divisions into which the army had now been divided were commanded by Generals Banks and Grover, respectively. On April 12 Banks crossed to Berwick City, and here Mr. Elliot failed to connect with his horse and equipments, which mishap afforded him the opportunity of marching on foot for thirty miles, meanwhile participating in the capture of Fort Bisland, so called, on Bayou Teche. This was on April 13 and 14.

Here Banks ran up against Taylor's troops strongly entrenched on both banks of the Teche, while our troops were astride of it. After a stiff fight of two days Taylor made good his retreat at night, because Grover was so delayed in his march that he failed to get in Taylor's rear, as planned, and block his line of retreat. Brushing aside or pushing forward the Confederates, Banks reached Opelousas, "which," Mr. Elliot writes, "is one of the cleanest and prettiest towns in Louisiana. Here I rode in with our cavalry, and under orders seized and put a guard over the State Land Office, in which I found not only innumerable plans of that part of Louisiana, but also many arms stored under heaps of old papers and rubbish, among them the sword of the Confederate Colonel Riley, who had been killed in a recent engagement, and also the commission of another officer in the rebel army. Under instructions, I turned over all these trophies to our Provost Marshal. Soon after entering the town, I rode out to the outskirts, and narrowly escaped capture by an ambuscade in the woods near by, being warned by a slave to turn quickly, as the horsemen whom I was riding out to meet in the thick woods were rebels, not Union men, as I had supposed.

"On the march to Alexandria (reached about May 8) I was

taken sick with congestion of the lungs, or pleuro-pneumonia, and given clearly to understand that this was my last march; but, thanks to pleasant weather and several days' rest, I was soon convalescent. Reconnaissances by the Engineer Corps showed that there were fairly good roads nearly to the Mississippi; so orders were given, and the army commenced its march down the Red River. I, being on the invalid list, was carried down by boat . . . to Bayou Sara (May 21), several miles north of Port Hudson. From Bayou Sara we marched on the night of May 21 to the battlefield of Plains Store, arriving at 2 o'clock in the morning of May 22. I was carried in an ambulance. Augur had been attacked by the Confederates on May 21, but had driven them back behind their works with considerable loss. Banks' forces from the North now joined Augur's from the South, and the investment of Port Hudson was complete." On what date Mr. Elliot reported for duty I find no record, but it is well known that he rendered efficient service throughout the siege. He writes: "New batteries were erected, zigzags or approaches commenced, heavy guns borrowed from the Navy mounted, mines planned, and everything gave promise of a long and tedious siege. Our saps and approaches were run towards the rebel works to within a very short distance, and a mine was nearly completed and ready for its powder. This was done under the supervision of the Nineteenth Army Corps Staff of Engineers, who suffered severely at Port Hudson, three being killed and one wounded, out of less than a dozen of us in all." The mine was not exploded.

Port Hudson unconditionally surrendered July 8, 1863. From this date till July 26 Mr. Elliot had charge of the engineer's office, preparing meanwhile the official plan of the siege. This, too, was the work of an expert. In September he accompanied General Franklin on the Sabine Pass expedition. In October he took part in the second expedition under Franklin in the Teche district. This, also, was abandoned. Returning to New Orleans, he was stricken with malarial fever. For a short time in November he was detailed for service at Fort

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Butler, and then to the Department of West Florida, under General Asboth, in December. Early in 1864 he was appointed engineer officer to General Grover in a proposed campaign against Mobile, where he had charge of construction of field fortifications in East Louisiana, for which he received from General Grover a personal letter commending him for his faithful and efficient service in designing and constructing the fortifications at Madisonville, on the east shore of Lake Pontchartrain. In the midst of this work the Red River campaign was entered upon, and Mr. Elliot was assigned to duty in this newly-formed army. He participated in all the fortunes and misfortunes of this campaign till Alexandria, on the Red River, was reached, when he was brought to a sudden halt by his not-to-be-avoided enemy, malarial fever, which entirely incapacitated him for further service in the Union Army.

Having executed the work in the army to which Providence had called him to the entire satisfaction of his commanding officers, Mr. Elliot, as a citizen engineer, received his honorable discharge from the Union service and returned to his Massachusetts home in April, 1864.

I have tried to give, though briefly and imperfectly, a chronological account of our late associate's army service. Let me add that commanding officers in the army have their own peculiar methods of showing their appreciation of the value of a man. Twice, at least, Mr. Elliot received special mention for meritorious service in the field, and was twice urged to accept a commission, both of which commissions he modestly declined to accept, the one act of his long and eminently useful life I deeply regret, because thereby he rendered himself ineligible to membership in the Grand Army of the Republic, for the comrades of which order he said and did so much! Nevertheless, for what he was and for what he did we revere his memory. Having conscientiously given the best there was in him to our common country in its time of dire necessity, he was satisfied to retire from the service with an honorable discharge as a citizen of this Grand Republic.

## ADDRESS OF WILLIAM H. ARMSTRONG AT MEMORIAL SERVICE OCTOBER 31, 1909.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: If I was to change my business or occupation, I would want to be a civil engineer. The study and education necessary to fit one for that work, the right sighting and accurate calculation, are the very things needed to start a man on his way for the business of life, be it what it may. George Washington was a surveyor, or civil engineer. He sighted a path through the trackless forest, set the corner-stones of towns, and ran the lines of estates in Virginia which stand to-day undisputed. The victorious army of the great Napoleon came to the bank of a river, and there found for the first time in all Europe something to halt their onward march. Calling his engineer, Napoleon said: "Tell me the distance across this stream." "Sire," said the engineer, "I cannot. I know no way by which it can be measured." "Tell me the distance across this river within one hour, or my corps will be without one of its engineers." Then came in play the training of the man in sighting and calculating distances. He fixed his eye on the opposite bank, where the water touched the shore; he pulled the visor of his cap down until it just met the edge of his view, and then, turning around, he sighted down the bank on which he stood to a certain mark. He paced this distance, reported his findings, and that night the army camped on the farther side of the river.

There are men with certain education and training whom we cannot do without; they are needed. No country can do without them, no army can do without them, no state, city, or town but must have its surveyor, or engineer.

Somerville is a city most prosperous and beautiful. It is a queen among the cities and towns of our glorious Commonwealth, and our friend had much to do with its beauty and prosperity. We were very fortunate in having for our first engineer Charles D. Elliot. He knew, as no one else could, the lay of the land, with its hills and its valleys. His trained eye saw

just how to convert its many hillsides, with their lines of beauty, into the city that we are now so proud of.

Mr. Elliot came to Somerville when he was nine years old. He was educated in our schools and in the Hopkins Classical at Cambridge. He then took up civil engineering, a calling suited to his taste and ability. In 1872-4-5 he was our city engineer. Then began the laying out of our streets with all the arteries of sewers, pipes, and wires which run through them. His eye sighted, his mind and cunning hand made the plans and established the lines which these should follow. Being brought into close touch with all our city's interests, he came to feel it a part of himself, for here he spent his early life, here he had his home, his family, his loved ones; his all was in Somerville.

I am to speak of the Board of Trade and Mr. Elliot's connection with it. The Board of Trade of our city is established, as it should be in every city, with one object in view, and that is to advance the interests of the community in every way possible. You are not surprised when I tell you that Mr. Elliot became a member of the Board at once, and put himself into the work of helping Somerville through its agencies.

The Board was organized in March, 1899; Mr. Elliot joined it in May. He had held the office of vice-president, was a member of several standing committees at different periods, and was a member of most of the special committees. I will name only a few of the more important ones, as those on boulevards, grade crossings, soldiers' monuments, rivers and harbors.

As a member of the boulevard committee, he saw the need of a connection, through Somerville, of the beautiful parks, driveways, and beaches on the north and east with the boulevards, parks, and fenway on the south and west of Boston. With our committee he worked earnestly, and if one of our governors had not used the veto power, Mr. Elliot and his friends would have seen the work completed with success, and we would now have a cross-town boulevard all our own.

As a member of the grade crossing committee, he was

deeply interested in the change of dangerous crossings at grade, and worked hard with some of us to do away with it, especially on the Fitchburg branch of the Boston & Maine Railroad, at Somerville Avenue, Medford Street, Webster Avenue, Park Street, etc. I wish he could see the advancement now made at Somerville Avenue. The construction has progressed so far that in a few weeks, we are told, we shall be able to cross in safety and without delays.

During the Civil War Mr. Elliot's services were promptly given to the country, and he did good and faithful work as a civil engineer in that branch of the service. His modesty alone kept him from having an officer's title attached to his name. On the special committee of our board for a memorial to our soldiers and sailors he did good work; his heart was in it. We now have the monument on our historic hilltop,—a work of art that will be a reminder for all time of love and sacrifice, home and country.

Rivers and harbors. You smile when our rivers and harbors are mentioned, we have so little of them. But Mr. Elliot had a vision of what might be done with our Mystic River front, and the picture of its beauty, as he would have it, was stamped upon his mind, and he often talked of it to his friends.

On several occasions he delivered interesting and valuable addresses before the Board. He was an active participant in our debates, a most constant attendant; he enjoyed his membership with us, and we enjoyed him.

On his death suitable resolutions were adopted, and our members attended his funeral services. We miss him from our membership, and as I think of it to-day, I do not know where we are to find one to fill his place. I knew him so well; he was so companionable and entertaining; he talked easily and well, was always a gentleman, clean and true. He has gone home a little while before us. We will, I know, meet again, and we shall know each other there, and in that City, in that better Country, I want him for a neighbor, I want to live on the same street with him.

When the great Phillips Brooks lay dead in the beautiful cathedral in yonder proud city, a great number came to pay their last respects to his memory: the young and old, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, from nation, state, and city, all anxious to take one last look at the face that was so dear to all. In the shadow of the doorway waited a poor old woman, with her shawl drawn closely about her. At last she found her way to the side of him who had been her friend. Taking from the folds of her garment a little flower, she dropped it with her tears into the casket, and then went her way. I want to put one little flower for myself and for the Board of Trade, that I represent, upon the memorial you are to-day building to the memory of our friend, Charles D. Elliot.

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#### ADDRESS OF F. M. HAWES AT MEMORIAL SERVICE

#### OCTOBER 31, 1909.

My personal relations with Charles D. Elliot were not of many years' standing. We were brought together, especially, as members and fellow-workers of the Somerville Historical Society. I can say I never came away from an interview with him without feeling I had learned something of historical interest; without being enriched by his estimate of men, or his wide knowledge of affairs.

Our tastes along historical lines and our views of life I found to be so congenial that I rejoiced greatly to have found in such a kindred spirit one who, by his enthusiasm and his fuller grasp of subjects, could lead me farther on the road which I had chosen. We all miss his companionship and cheer, and his loss to this Society is irreparable.

In selecting from the copious notes supplied me by the family, I may fail to touch upon all the salient features of his life, although even the minutest details have proved interesting to me.

A few words in relation to his boyhood. He used to like to tell that he was born the same day Victoria became Queen

of England (June 20, 1837). Being an only child for nearly ten years may have tended to make him sober-minded and serious beyond his years. His mother wished him to be a minister, and he was offered a scholarship in Tufts College when he was about twenty, but he declined, as he did not feel that he was fitted for that profession. But some very precocious religious meditations, written at the age of eight, show that, for a time, at least, his mother had very fertile ground to work upon. He had a fondness for standing on the church steps near his home and preaching, with any book he could get hold of for a Bible. One day, when he was much younger than eight, he took his father's new dictionary to preach from, but, becoming interested in something else, he left the book on the steps, where he forgot all about it. A long rain followed, much to the damage of the dictionary.

He could be as mischievous as other children, and once gave the teacher of the first school he attended so much trouble that she shut him up in the kindling closet, and, forgetting all about him, was locking up to go home for the night, when his mother came to look for him, as it was past the hour for his return. The frightened teacher hastened to open the door, and there he lay, fast asleep.

His first public speech before any considerable audience was on the occasion of his first attendance at church. As he became restless, he was allowed to stand up on the pew seat, and was given his mother's fan. Soon, loud enough to be plainly heard, and holding up the fan, he said: "See, mamma, I make it into two pieces!"

When very small, he was taken on a long drive to visit relatives in Vermont. Seeing a squirrel run across the road, he was sure it must be a bear, and wanted his father to get him a gun to shoot it with. When older grown he was very fond of a gun, and of shooting at a target, and became a very good marksman. As a young man he was athletic. He attended the gymnasium of Dr. Winship, and was once able to lift a weight of 1,000 pounds.

At school he was generally called on when visitors were present to "speak his pieces" for their edification. It was the custom then for the boys to learn a selection of their own choosing, and to speak every Friday afternoon. At one time the teacher complained that the selections were too short. Accordingly, several of the boys arranged to have very long ones. Young Elliot committed to memory twenty pages of Scott's "Marmion," and when his turn came, got as far, we will say, as the eighteenth, when the teacher asked how much longer he was going to speak, as there were several others to be heard from, and he did not wish to stay all night. There were no further objections to short selections after that.

When in his teens, he belonged to several debating clubs, and was well versed in Cushing's Manual. At the age of sixteen, or thereabouts, he was Secretary of the Cambridge Library Association, most of whose members were men of mature years. He was connected with the Franklin Literary Association before he was twenty, and at one time was its secretary. A Shakespeare Club of four members used to vie with each other to see who could produce the greatest volume of sound, "trying," as he used to say, "to raise the roof with their oratory."

From a lad Mr. Elliot was fond of using tools. The Fitchburg Railroad had machine and carpenter shops near Union Square then, and he was always welcomed by the men and allowed to use any tools which he wished. Among other things, he made the patterns and castings for a turning lathe, which he kept by him for many years.

When a small boy, he drew excellent maps and could letter them well, being self-taught. This probably led to his entering the engineer office of Mr. Stearns when he was eighteen, at the close of his high school course. At school he had taken lessons in drawing, and delighted in sketching. Several of his sketches, which are still preserved, show considerable artistic ability and much care and skill. The same could be said of his engineering plans and charts, and of his maps. The delicate

handiwork of some of these, not a few of which, reduced in size, have appeared in historical works, makes them veritable works of art.

But Mr. Elliot's artistic ability was not limited to drawing and sketching; he often wrote poetry, especially in his earlier years. Some of these efforts possessed considerable merit, and gave evidence of a delicacy of feeling and a fineness of touch. He was so modest, however, that he could not be prevailed upon to submit his poems for publication, and rarely showed them to any but members of the family. For the Good Templars, a temperance organization in which he was early interested, he wrote at least one occasional poem, entitled "The Templars."

Mr. Elliot was so fond of fun that rhyming squibs flowed from his pen without effort. The few that have been preserved serve to illustrate an agreeable side of his nature.

We should not do full justice to our subject, now that we are brought to this point of view, if we failed to speak of Mr. Elliot's social nature. It is no disparagement of a man to say that he is known to many of his friends and hailed by them by his Christian name. Mr. Elliot was fond of good company, and his fund of stories gave him an easy entrance to the inner circle. He loved a joke hugely, as long as it was a pleasant one, but he did not approve of those made at the expense of some one's feelings. Another trait, known to those who associated with him, was his natural refinement. For anything bordering on coarseness or vulgarity he felt only abhorrence and contempt.

A mind as active as Mr. Elliot's could not fail to be possessed of considerable originality and imagination. New ideas were constantly suggesting themselves, new projects were ever urging to some untried effort. These fields were varied and wide, and related not only to his profession, but to business enterprises of various kinds. Often they were schemes for improving existing conditions or advancing the public welfare; specific improvements in politics and government. He had many subjects stored away for magazine articles, and would

have liked, with a time of leisure, to enter the lecture field. These topics afforded interesting subjects for conversation when he met with a congenial friend. Many of these were drawn from history, but not all.

The range of his interests was wide, but, as those who knew him well need not be told, his chief interests, aside from his profession, were connected with the subjects of history and the public welfare. His public spirit and keen insight into human needs were dominating features of his character. He was interested in great public movements for the improvement of the race in all quarters and among all conditions of men. Characterized by sincerity of purpose and disinterestedness, he advocated measures from conviction, and always acted from principle, not for effect or for popularity. He was a man of the highest integrity. In connection with his devotion to historical matters, we ought to mention his fondness for looking over old records. He rarely went on a vacation without choosing some place where there were records which he wished to consult, and a large part of a holiday was spent over them. His love of genealogical research began early, and continued to the very end.

As a recreation, and for refreshment after the toils of the day, Mr. Elliot found time for reading and keeping abreast of the times. His literary menu was extensive, and besides history and biography, included travels, scientific researches, archaeological expeditions, a little fiction, and much poetry. He loved to read poetry aloud. Sometimes he would read a serious poem in comic fashion, to create a laugh. "The last time was on Thanksgiving night, when surrounded by his family. He had been poorly all day. Just as he was about to retire for the night, he was urged to give a reading, some one saying 'it would not seem like Thanksgiving without it.' He turned back and read for an hour in his happiest vein, winding up with Grey's 'Elegy,' read in such an amusing way as quite to change its character, and leave every one laughing. Two weeks later and he was gone, never to return."

In connection with his reading, we ought to mention that he was a great admirer of the first Napoleon, and collected all the books he could find about him.

Mr. Elliot was a collector in the real sense of the word. He loved books, especially old books, and was fond of attending book auctions. His library numbers several thousand volumes, largely, but by no means wholly, scientific and historical. Among his treasures of a purely literary character is a *de luxe* edition of Longfellow, who was perhaps his favorite poet. One volume which he loved to exhibit to those who cared for such things was printed in 1192. He was greatly interested in Arctic explorations, and owned the works of some of the earlier explorers in those fields. Mr. Elliot was a high authority on certain kinds of books, especially on Americana. He knew the best authorities, the excellencies and weaknesses of well-known writers, as well as those of lesser note. He knew about the different editions of authors and their market value.

Besides his library, he had an interesting collection of autographs, some of which were attached to documents of historic value. Among his autographs were the signatures of several signers of the Declaration of Independence, that of George Washington, and several other Presidents. He was particularly pleased to secure an original Revolutionary company's pay-warrant, bearing the signature of General William Heath and his under officer, Captain Thomas Urann (one of Mrs. Elliot's ancestors).

At one time Mr. Elliot had a valuable collection of postage stamps; he also possessed rare coins of all nations, and a relic collection which included Indian arrow-heads (one of which was found on his own home lot), a Revolutionary cannon ball, South Sea Island weapons, pistols once owned by Ethan Allen, etc. In connection with the study of geology, he once gathered together a very creditable cabinet of minerals.

He always placed a high value on such heirlooms as chanced to come to his branch of the family, whether it were

furniture, china, or other things. Like Mr. Hardcastle, he loved everything old. Among these heirlooms was a New England Primer, used by his grandfather, Joel Elliot, in 1784 or thereabouts.

Our friend was greatly interested in the law, and was well versed in some of its points. He was told more than once by men of the legal profession that, with a little study, he might easily be admitted to the bar. More than that, he was an authority on certain branches of the law.

Upon the legal aspects of his professional endeavor he always entered with a keen zest, whether called upon as an expert witness, or to negotiate, out of court, settlements for damages to estates. Because of his interest in the success of his clients, his keen perception of the drift of the opposing counsel's attack, and his coolness on the witness stand, his services were highly valued, and were not uncommonly sought afterwards by the lawyer or corporation against whom he had happened to be called. Many times he was sought by the other side of the same case, after he had engaged himself to the first comer. On one occasion it was a question of certain rights between a railroad and a town. (The case did not come into the courts.) At a preliminary meeting the railroad's counsel offered to give the town a quit-claim deed of the railroad's rights. Mr. Elliot, who was engaged for the town, said: "Sir, I will give you a quit-claim deed of the whole X Y Z railroad system." Asked what he meant, he replied: "I will release to you all my right in the railroad. That is all a 'quit-claim' means."

As witness for the Fitchburg Railroad in an accident case, at a crossing where there were fully 600 yards of clear track visible on either side of the station, he was asked by counsel for the plaintiff: "Do you mean to tell this jury that this man could have seen that train coming?" Using a legal phrase which carries great weight, Mr. Elliot replied: "Yes, I think he could have done so by using 'due care.'"

This reply did not please the opposition counsel, who thundered: "Does the Fitchburg Railroad *pay* you for manufac-

*ing testimony?" "Why, they always have paid my bills heretofore; I presume they will not refuse this time," was the easy reply, and the innocent smile which accompanied it caused mirth in the court room.*

Mr. Elliot's services were occasionally called for in the appraising of estates. Because of the large number of plans which he had made of our city lots, and his knowledge of their history, a knowledge which went back in many instances to the days of the "Stinted Commons," and the first grants, no one had a better standard of land values. The secret of his knowledge in this, as well as in other fields, lay not alone in his excellent memory, but in the painstaking and accurate methods by which he had come at the knowledge. Whatever he was engaged upon, he always made thoroughness and accuracy the main objects. He used to say that he wanted whatever he did to be done right. Accordingly, he was never satisfied until he obtained the perfect result.

It will not be denied, I think, that Mr. Elliot lacked self-appreciation, and often set too light a value on his own abilities. Partly for this reason, and partly because he was too ready to trust some of those he dealt with, other people often reaped the benefit of his efforts. One of his best traits was his desire to think the best of his fellow-men.

He was always ready to take time, even when very busy with important affairs, to help people who came for information or advice; he thus gave freely what had cost him much time and effort. People were constantly seeking such help, not merely his friends, but sometimes entire strangers. He has been known to write for people articles or speeches which of course passed as their own compositions. Sometimes he revised other people's writings, often an entire book, but always as an accommodation. He never asked nor would he have accepted remuneration for such work. Not infrequently he assisted men professionally.

Too modest to place a sufficiently high value on his own services and experiences, he put off too long making a record

of much that he had learned, much that was well worth preserving, and which no one else can reproduce. When urged to write his war experiences, he would say: "Oh, nobody will be interested in them." He was much surprised by the great attention which his articles on "The History of Somerville" received when they appeared in the Somerville Journal some years ago.

The following letter from Mrs. Elliot will serve to throw light on Mr. Elliot's life in Louisiana. As a description of a wedding journey, it deserves to be copyrighted:—

"My parents emigrated to Wisconsin Territory in 1836 from New England. Mr. Hyer was made a judge of probate, and was a member of the State Constitutional Convention. His health demanding a warmer climate, he moved to St. Louis, Mo., in 1847 or 1848, and in 1854-5 to Texas. The breaking out of the Civil War found us in Louisiana, about sixty miles north of New Orleans, where Judge Hyer's too outspoken Union sentiments made him a 'marked man' by the Rebels. He had many friends, however, who aided him on several occasions when plots were laid against him. In the fall of 1862 we closed up our home, determined to reach New Orleans, then in control of the Union Army. At Madisonville, a small town near Lake Ponchartrain, we waited three weeks for a chance to cross to the city. Finally a small schooner loaded with charcoal arrived, which had received a permit from Richmond to cross, as they wished to send over some spies. By bribing the corporal of the Rebel guard to send off his men an hour early, we got our chance to go on board before daylight, and before dark the same day reached the entrance to the canal leading up to New Orleans. Before we were allowed to land we had to take an oath of allegiance to the United States, although we were Unionists.

"Judge Hyer went immediately to General Butler and showed him his plans of Eastern Louisiana, where we had been residing. Judge Hyer had been obliged to give up practicing law on account of his health, and had gone into surveying and

engineering. General Butler appointed Mr. Hyer on his Engineering staff. When General Banks superseded General Butler in the command of New Orleans, December, 1862, Mr. Elliot and Judge Hyer met in the Engineering Department, and Judge Hyer invited Mr. Elliot and several other young men to his home to introduce them to the Union people of the city, of whom there were many.

"September 3, 1863, Mr. Elliot and myself were married. During the ceremony an orderly was seen coming up the aisle of the church, making straight for us. He would have interrupted the ceremony to deliver his orders, if he had not been intercepted by Judge Hyer, who took the order, with the assurance that he would give it to Mr. Elliot himself. It proved to be an order to prepare immediately to join an expedition under General Franklin, who was then his engineer officer, to a destination unknown, which sailed the next day, and expected to be gone six months or more.

"They sailed up Sabine River, the boundary between Texas and Louisiana, were beaten back by a small fort, aided by the oyster banks in the river, on which two of our gunboats got aground under the guns of the fort. General Franklin's force, scattered and demoralized, returned to New Orleans, after an absence of eight days, but the headquarters ship, the Suffolk, on which Mr. Elliot was, was run into by another ship in the darkness during the retreat. The lights were out to prevent the Rebels from pursuing them with 'cotton clad' boats. The two ships lay side by side, crashing into each other for some time before any one had sense enough to separate them. The wheel house on the Suffolk was crushed, and the boat was said to be sinking. Nearly all on board, including General Franklin and most of his staff, and the ship's officers and crew, jumped over into the other ship. Mr. Elliot said he could not see that the Suffolk settled any, and all who jumped over to the other ship were likely to be crushed between the two, as they crashed together every few minutes. Mr. Elliot and a few others, about a dozen in all, including the ship's engineer,

stayed on board, and reached New Orleans in safety after three days, during which time they endured much hardship and danger. They encountered a storm, and the ship was badly shattered, but they reached the shelter of the Mississippi River before the storm reached its height.

"This was Mr. Elliot's wedding journey, taken alone. About seven months later we came to Massachusetts, by way of the Gulf and Atlantic, as the Rebels still held the intervening territory."

The following will not be out of place here: Mrs. Elliot was born in Union, Rock county, Wis., November 23, 1843. She was a teacher in one of the grammar schools of New Orleans, and secretary of the Union Ladies' Soldiers' Aid Society of that city, of which her mother (Mrs. Hyer) was president. This was one of the first organizations of the kind in the Southern states. Mrs. Elliot's own father was David Ring, Jr., who was born in Sumner, Me., April 7, 1801, and died in Wisconsin in June, 1874. He married, June 24, 1824, Mary, daughter of John, Jr., and Mary (Uram) Spencer. She was born in Bangor, Me., in 1806, and died in Wisconsin October 13, 1846. Mr. and Mrs. Elliot were married by Rev. F. E. R. Chubbuck, post chaplain and officiating clergyman at Christ Church, New Orleans. This was a double wedding, the other couple being George Hay Brown, one of the photographers belonging to the Engineer Corps, and Miss Lizzie Sakaski, a friend of Mrs. Elliot.

The Somerville Historical Society was incorporated in 1898, and Mr. Elliot was the first president after incorporation, having served as a vice-president before that time from the formation of the Society. In 1898 the Society rented the Oliver Tufts House on Sycamore Street as its headquarters, and in the early winter of that year gave the Historical Festival, in connection with which a relic exhibition at their headquarters was a successful feature, and one in which Mr. Elliot was very active. He was also a leading spirit in a similar exhibition held at the Somerville High School in 1892, the year of the Semi-Centennial of the city.

It would be impossible to give full credit to Mr. Elliot's devotion to this Society. From its formation to the end of his busy life, we who were present at his last meeting with us can truly say that he was the father of this organization. Not only was he a cheerful giver of his valuable time when called to serve upon committees and as a member of the Council, but every member went away from a literary meeting feeling that the evening had been enriched when Mr. Elliot, as was his invariable custom, illuminated the subject in hand from his storehouse of historical information. Often he would bring from his collections at home books, maps, autographs, or pictures, many of them of unique value, to illustrate the topic of the evening. Then, too, by his ready wit, his fondness for making a pun, or his skill at repartee, he sent us all home with a smile or a laugh at what in him seemed so innate, so purely spontaneous. He was a type of the true genial gentleman. At times he was called before other historical societies to read some of his papers, and I well remember the keen pleasure these visits afforded him, and the luminous report he would bring home from a sister organization. A case in point occurred two seasons ago, when he was entertained at the magnificent old mansion, "The Buttonwoods," the home of the Haverhill Historical Society.

Perhaps no truer estimate of the man whose memory we love to cherish could be given than was twice expressed by the Somerville Journal, once of the living, July 28, 1905, and again on the occasion of Mr. Elliot's death, in its issue of December 11, 1908.

"To mention the name of Charles Darwin Elliot is to call attention to one of the most active and prominent residents of Somerville during the whole of its municipal career. For nearly sixty years he has known Somerville, and during almost all of that time he has been a resident of the town and city. . . . His life has been a busy one from his earliest youth. As a boy he could run a mile in five and one-quarter minutes. He did things then, and he can do them now, although he has com-

pleted his sixty-eighth year. In the fullness of years, he is still engaged in civil engineering, which has been his life work. His has been an experience equaled by few men in the profession."

And again at the time of Mr. Elliot's death: "His career was remarkable for its usefulness to the nation and to the community. No man in the city was more conversant with Somerville history, and this fund of general information was always at the disposal of the public. Geniality was characteristic of the kindly-natured man, who was most happy when among his friends, and his entertaining reminiscences were frequently interspersed with amusing stories and witty speeches. He had an intense interest in the public welfare. In the family circle he was a tender husband and father. His death deprives Somerville of one of its most upright citizens, whose achievements in his chosen profession, in the realm of history, and in his private life will preserve an honored memory. . . . Besides his public service as the first City Engineer, and in the various organizations in which he was an active member, he was easily first of all men in his knowledge of Somerville history. For years . . . his literary talent and much of his time were devoted to preparing papers and arranging documentary material that had to do with the early days of Somerville. With him goes much valuable and interesting historical information which can never be replaced. . . . He was public-spirited in the highest degree. He was the man at whose suggestion the Somerville Journal was established, and from the early days of the city until his death he was actively concerned with projects looking towards the betterment of the city. His presence will be missed in many companies. Kindly, cheerful, entertaining, and talented, a man of high integrity and spotless character, he leaves a whole city to sympathize with his bereaved family."

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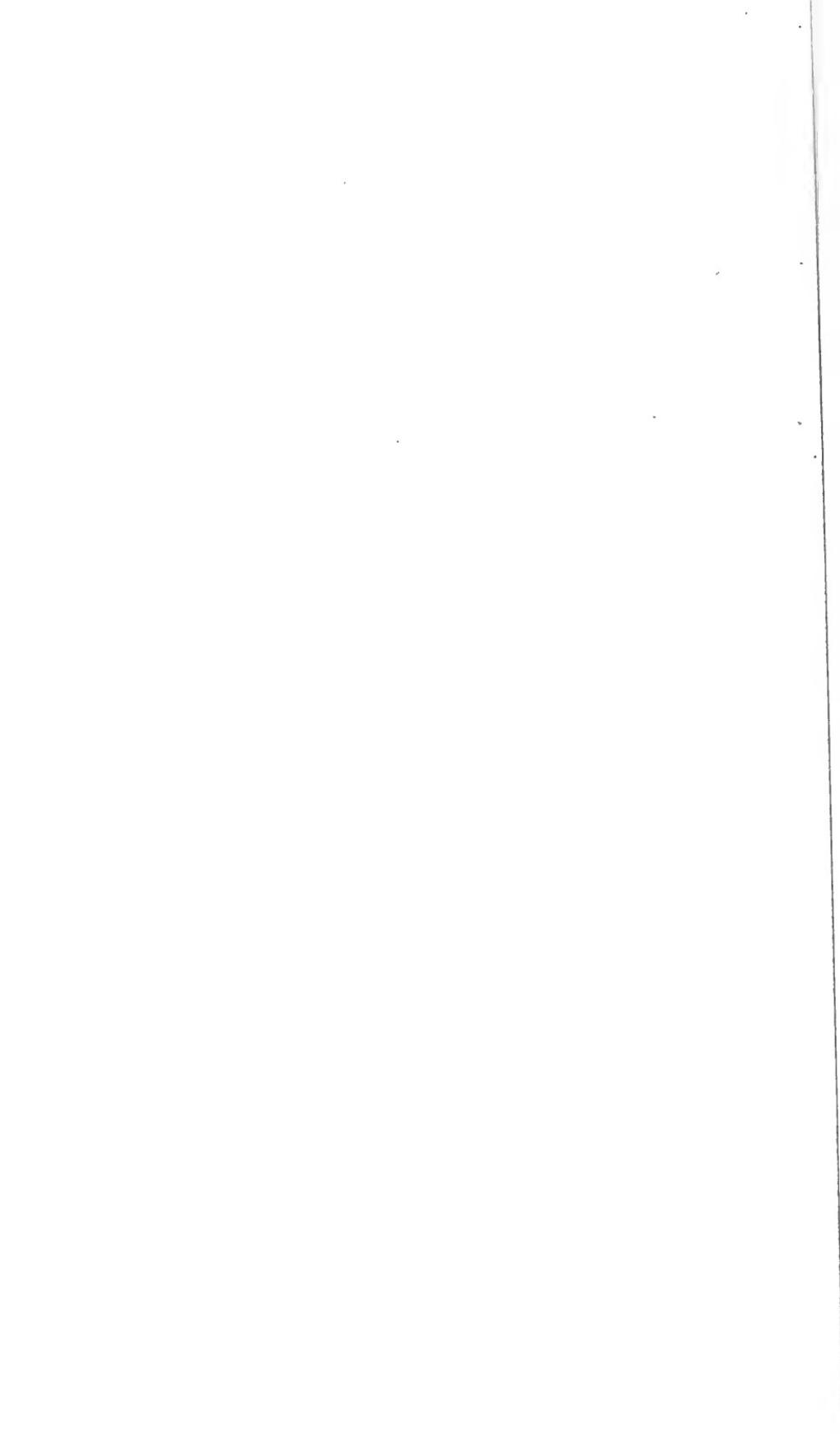
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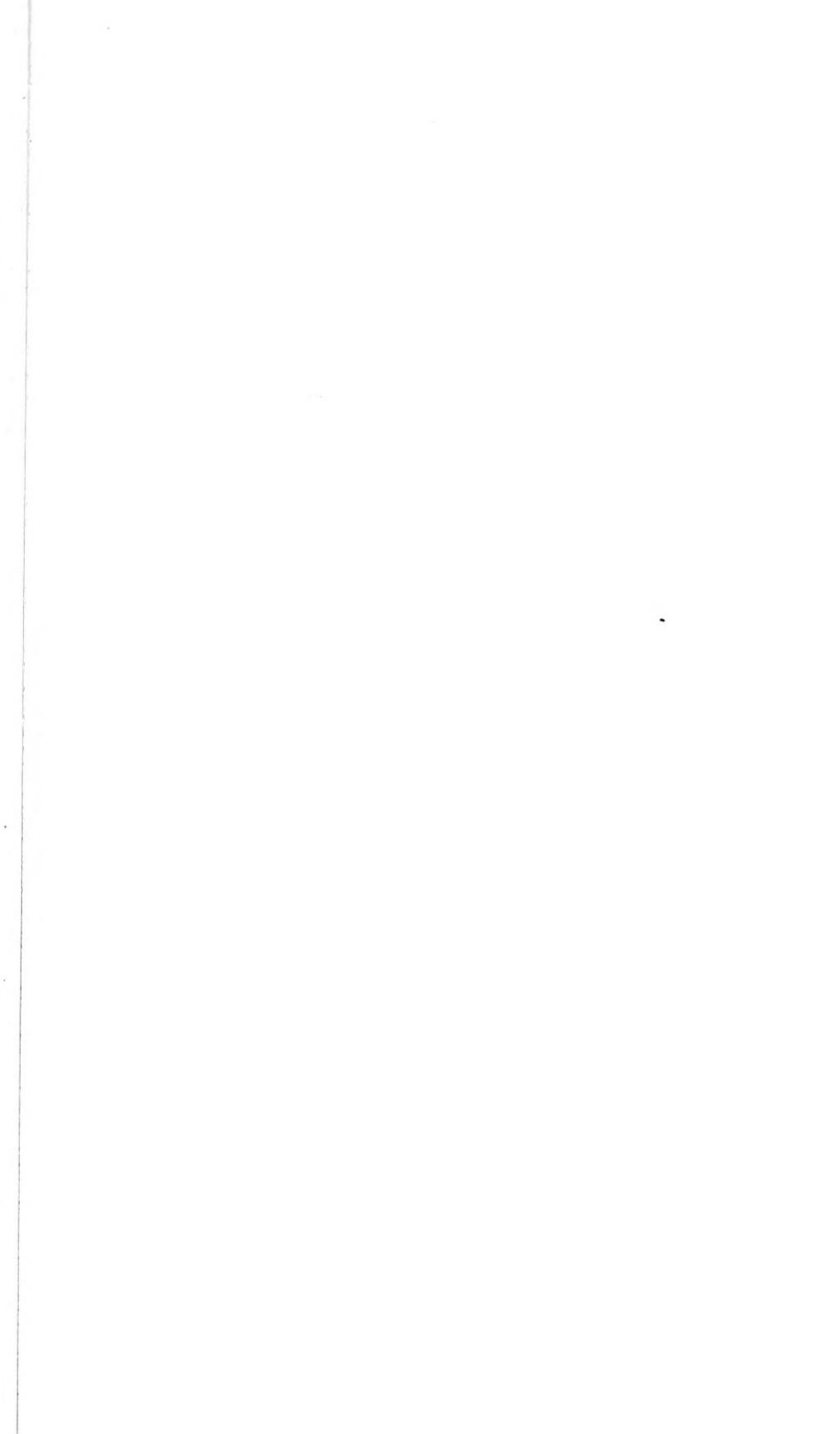
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